

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 4 and 5 will be pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-3 are herein canceled. New claim 5 is herein added. Claim 4 is herein amended to depend from independent claim 5.

It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated June 29, 2006.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

To expedite prosecution and clarify the subject matter of the present invention, Applicants hereby incorporate the Examiner's suggestions into new claim 5. Furthermore, for at least the following reasons, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner position with regards to "a device for wrapping" and "a device for placing". Applicants direct the Examiner's attention to the disclosure, for example, on pages 6 and 7 and in Figures 1 and 3 of the specification. This disclosure clearly describes that the claimed apparatus comprises a separate and independent device for placing the release film on an outer layer of the laminated prepreg sheets. For instance, pages 6 and 7 of the specification teach that "the release films fed from the feeding reels 71 and 72 are overlapped on the surface of the prepreg sheets via guide rolls." Moreover, one device is for wrapping a tape-like release film and the other device is placing a release film on an outer layer of the laminated prepreg sheets (*e.g.*, these are two different release

films.) Accordingly, the §112 rejection is improper because the claimed apparatus comprises the claimed separate and independent devices.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent 2001-328130 in view of *Skoggard et al.*, *Jackson* and optionally further taken with *Goldsworthy*. Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest the features of independent claim 5. Accordingly, in view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner allow claim 5.

To establish a *prima facie* obviousness rejection, the Examiner must both set forth a modification of a reference or references based on evidenced motivation and properly detail that each and every claimed feature is disclosed by the same modified reference or references.

However, the Examiner has not shown that the cited references, either alone or in combination, teach *a device for wrapping a tape-like release film on the laminated prepreg sheets in a circumferential direction after the predetermined number of prepreg sheets are laminated*. For example, *Skoggard* merely teaches that “[t]he product is completed by an outer wrap or sleeve, applied by the station 38, which comprises a band or strip of sheet plastic 45 snugly wound about the outer course of reinforcing filaments and plastic and secured by an adhesive sealing strip 46 helically wound over the abutting edges of the wound band.” Thus, *Skoggard* does not disclose “a device for wrapping a tape-like release film” as described in the claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the features of independent claim 5 are not taught or suggested by references cited by the Examiner.

Furthermore, in view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of dependent claim 4 should also be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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